

Method for the multi-antenna transmission of a linearly-precoded signal, corresponding devices, signal and reception method.

1. Field of the invention

The field of the invention is that of wireless digital communications. More 5 specifically, the invention relates to the sending/reception of a signal that implements a precoding matrix in a MIMO ("Multiple Input Multiple Output") type multi-antenna system also called a "BLAST" (Bell Laboratories Layered Space-Time") system.

The invention can be applied in the field of radio communications, 10 especially for systems of the third, fourth and subsequent generations.

2. Prior art approaches

Several sending/reception systems, comprising multiple antennas are already known. Some of the systems use space-time encoding by which their spatial/temporal diversity can be exploited with the utmost efficiency. However, 15 the spectral efficiency of these space-time codes is limited.

Certain research work then led to the study of layered space-time (LST) systems using spatial multiplexing techniques to obtain systems whose capacity increases linearly with the number of transmit and receiver antennas.

Thus Foschini, in "Layered Space-Time Architecture for Wireless 20 Communication in a Fading Environment When Using Multiple Antennas" (Bell Laboratories Technical Journal, Vol.1, No.2, Autumn, 1996, pp. 41-59) presented a first space multiplexing system aimed at augmenting the capacity of transmission systems. To this end, he described a diagonal "BLAST" structure 25 (known as D-BLAST) in which the coded or non-coded and interleaved symbols of each layer are transmitted successively by each of the transmit antennas.

Wolniansky, Foschini, Golden and Valenzuela, in "V-BLAST: An Architecture for Realizing Very High Data Rates Over the Rich-Scattering Wireless Channel" (Proc. ISSSE-98, Pisa, Italy, Sept .29, 1998), subsequently simplified this technique by modifying the architecture of the initial "BLAST" 30 system into a vertical system ("V-BLAST ") without encoding, and by using an

interference cancellation algorithm at reception with a zero forcing (ZF) criterion. This vertical architecture quite simply proceeds from a demultiplexing of the chain of information into sub-chains, each of them being transmitted by its respective antenna.

5 Subsequently, Baro, Bauch, Pavlic and Semmler ("Improving BLAST Performance using Space-Time Block Codes and Turbo Decoding", Globecom 2000, November 2000) envisaged the combination of the space-time codes and turbo-decoding with codes V-BLAST type systems.

Finally, Ma and Giannakis ("Full-Diversity Full-Rate Complex-Field
10 Space-Time Coding", IEEE Transactions on Signal Processing 2003) presented a technique combining linear precoding with MIMO techniques of spatial multiplexing at the time of sending. In this technique, linear precoding is done by the use of particular precoding matrices based on Vandermonde matrices, the different symbols at the time of sending being sent cyclically. The decoding in
15 reception is done according to a maximum likelihood detector.

3. Drawbacks of the prior art

A first drawback of the "BLAST" technique of spatial multiplexing proposed by Foschini is its decoding complexity.

Another drawback of this technique, which was subsequently changed into
20 the "V-BLAST" technique, is that the maximum spatial diversity of the systems is not exploited.

As for the technique envisaged by Baro, Bauch, Pavlic and Semmler, which consists in combining the space-time codes with the V-BLAST system, it has the drawback of not exploiting the maximum capacity of the system.

25 Furthermore, the different prior art techniques cannot be used to process correlated channels.

These different drawbacks are partially resolved by the technique of Ma and Giannakis which can be used to exploit both the space-time diversity of the systems, by means of linear precoding, and their maximum capacity.

However, a major drawback of this technique is the receiver used, which must be of the maximum likelihood (abbreviated as ML) type. These ML receivers are complex to implement and, owing to their complexity, limit the size of the precoding matrix to the number of transmit antennas of the system.

5 **4. Aims of the invention**

It is an aim of the invention especially to overcome these drawbacks of the prior art.

More specifically, it is an aim of the invention to provide a technique for the multi-antenna sending and reception of a signal implementing a precoding 10 matrix with better performance than that of prior art precoding systems.

It is another aim of the invention to implement a technique of this kind having lower complexity and greater numerical stability than prior art techniques. More particularly, it is an aim of the invention to provide a technique of this kind that does not necessitate space-time codes.

15 It is yet another aim of the invention to implement a technique of this kind that is adapted to MIMO type multi-antenna systems for both single-carrier and multiple-carrier (OFDM and MC-CDMA) type modulations.

It is also an aim of the invention to provide a technique of this kind by which is possible to use the maximum capacity of the MIMO system and the 20 maximum diversity of the system.

It is also an aim of the invention to implement a technique of this kind having improved binary error rate performance as compared with the prior art, while at the same time proposing a solution of the low complexity at reception.

It is yet another aim of the invention to implement a technique of this kind 25 that can be used to process correlated multi-antenna channels while limiting deterioration of performance and while not depending on modulation.

5. Summary of the invention

These aims as well as others that shall appear here below are achieved by means of a method for the sending of a signal formed by vectors, each vector 30 comprising N source symbols to be sent, and implementing M transmit antennas where M is greater than or equal to 2.

According to the invention, a linear precoding is performed on said signal, implementing a matrix product of a source matrix, formed by said vectors organized in successive rows, by a linear precoding matrix, delivering a precoded matrix, then precoded vectors corresponding to columns of the precoded matrix 5 are sent successively, the M symbols of each precoded vector being distributed over the M antennas.

Thus, the invention relies on a wholly novel and inventive approach to the sending of a signal, implementing linear precoding in a multi-antenna system.

More specifically, the invention proposes to carry out a transposed space-10 time mapping, i.e. it proposes to send the symbols having undergone the same precoding by column on the M antennas.

This approach therefore differs sharply from the cyclical sending proposed by Ma and Giannakis, which induced high complexity at reception.

The technique of the invention is particularly advantageous because it can 15 be used to exploit the maximum capacity of the MIMO channel, given that it does not use space-time codes, and maximum space-time diversity, through the linear precoding.

The number M of transmit antennas corresponds to the number of vectors to be sent, these vectors forming the different rows of the source matrix.

20 Advantageously, the precoding matrix of such a sending method is a block matrix.

Preferably, the precoding matrix is a unitary matrix having a size greater than or equal to M.

Thus, the invention is distinguished from prior art techniques since the size 25 of the precoding matrix is not always equal to the number M of transmit antennas. As shall be seen here below in this document, this is made possible according to the invention through the implementation of a decoding operation of low complexity that therefore enables simple decoding even with large precoding matrices.

30 This precoding matrix belongs to the group comprising the Hadamard matrices, special unitary matrices sized 2 x 2, also written as SU(2), Fourier

matrices, Vandermonde matrices and, more generally, unitary matrices.

In one advantageous embodiment of the invention, the precoding matrix is a block matrix having the form:

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$$\Theta_L = \sqrt{\frac{2}{L}} \cdot \begin{bmatrix} \Theta_{L/2} & \Theta_{L/2} \\ \Theta_{L/2} & -\Theta_{L/2} \end{bmatrix}^T$$

with $\Theta_2 = \begin{bmatrix} e^{i\theta_1} \cos \eta & e^{i\theta_2} \sin \eta \\ -e^{-i\theta_2} \sin \eta & e^{-i\theta_1} \cos \eta \end{bmatrix}$

and $\eta = \frac{\pi}{4} + k \frac{\pi}{2}$, $\theta_2 = \theta_1 - \frac{\pi}{2}$, and for $i \in [1, 2]$, $\theta_i = \frac{\pi}{4} + k' \frac{\pi}{2}$ where k, k' are relative integers.

The invention also relates to a method for the reception of a signal sent on 10 M transmit antennas where M is greater than or equal to 2, implementing P receiver antennas, where P greater than or equal to 2.

According to the invention, reception vectors are received on the P antennas and are distributed by columns in a reception matrix, the P symbols of a reception vector being distributed on the P antennas. The method then 15 implements an operation for processing the reception matrix, comprising a step of multiplication by a linear de-precoding matrix representing a linear precoding matrix used at sending, so as to obtain a de-precoded matrix by which it is possible to extract an estimation of the source symbols sent.

It shall be noted that, for optimal reception, the number P of antennas in 20 reception is greater than or equal to the number M of transmit antennas.

Herein and throughout the rest of the document, the term “de-precoding” is understood to mean an operation that is substantially the reverse of the precoding operation performed at the sending stage.

In a first embodiment, the de-precoding matrix is the conjugate transpose 25 matrix of the precoding matrix.

In this case, with the sent signal being conveyed between the M transmit antennas and the P receiver antennas by a transmission channel, the reception matrix is multiplied, during the processing operation, by a matrix representing the

inverse of the transmission channel, so as to obtain a matrix of estimated symbols sent. The matrix of estimated symbols sent is then multiplied by the de-precoding matrix.

Indeed, the implementation of a MIMO system, comprising a plurality of 5 transmit antennas and a plurality of receiver antennas, induces the existence of different transmit antenna/receiver antenna paths on which it is possible to transmit the payload information, where these different paths can be schematically represented by a channel matrix.

In reception, the channel encoding estimated on the different paths must be 10 inverted in order to retrieve the symbols sent. Assuming that the channel is perfectly known to the receiver, it is enough to carry out an inversion of the channel matrix.

The reception method especially comprises a preliminary step of detection of the M transmit antennas implementing a successive cancellation algorithm.

15 In a second embodiment, with the sent signal being conveyed between the M transmit antennas and the P receiver antennas by a transmission channel, the de-precoding matrix is an inverse matrix of a total matrix associating the matrix of the channel and the linear precoding matrix.

In this embodiment, the reception method implements a decoding with 20 ordering, which enables a priority decoding of the channels having the best signal-to-noise ratio.

25 In this case, the de-precoding matrix is determined by implementation of a Cholesky decomposition algorithm, which can be used to obtain a decoding method that costs little in computation and is less complex than the prior art techniques.

The maximum likelihood type techniques are well known and satisfactory but complex.

For the decoding of MIMO systems, the use of a Cholesky decomposition with a minimum mean square error (MMSE) criterion is totally novel and can be 30 used to resolve this drawback of complexity inherent in prior-art techniques.

One alternative to the Cholesky decomposition would be to use a QR decomposition with the ZF criterion. This technique also has low complexity but shows less satisfactory results.

According to one variant of the invention, with the de-precoding matrix 5 being a block matrix, the reception method carries out a distance minimization by change of symbol in a block. This further improves the decoder of the invention.

The invention also relates to a signal formed by vectors sent successively on M transmit antennas, where M is greater than or equal to 2, the M symbols of each vector being distributed on the M antennas. According to the invention, the 10 vectors are precoded vectors corresponding to columns of a precoded matrix obtained by taking the matrix product of a linear precoding matrix and a source matrix, formed by source vectors each comprising N source symbols to be sent, the source vectors being organized in said source matrix in successive rows.

The invention also relates to a device for sending a signal formed by 15 vectors each comprising N source symbols to be sent, and implementing M transmit antennas, where M is greater than or equal to 2, for a sending method as described here above.

The invention also relates to a device for the reception of a signal sent on M transmit antennas, where M is greater than or equal to 2, the device comprising 20 P receiver antennas, where P is greater than or equal to 2.

6. List of figures

Other features and advantages of the invention shall appear more clearly from the following description of a preferred embodiment, given by way of a simple illustrative and non-exhaustive example and from the appended drawings, 25 of which:

Figure 1 illustrates a four-transmit-antenna system implementing a source matrix X and a precoding matrix Θ according to the invention;

Figure 2A presents a system with four antennas for the reception of a signal sent according to the system of figure 1, in a first embodiment of the 30 invention known as an embodiment without ordering (without "sequencing");

Figure 2B presents a system with four antennas for the reception of a signal sent according to the system of figure 1, in a second embodiment of the invention known as an embodiment with ordering (sequencing);

5 Figure 3 describes the comparative performance of the different systems, namely the prior art system without linear precoding and the system of the invention with linear precoding for a precoding matrix sized four and a precoding matrix sized 256.

7. Description of an embodiment of the invention

10 The general principle of the invention is based on a novel system of linear precoding, at the time of sending, for a multi-antenna system. A source matrix, formed by vectors to be sent arranged in successive rows is multiplied by a precoding matrix having a size greater than or equal to the number of transmit antennas, to form a precoded matrix. Each of the symbols forming a same column of the precoded matrix is then sent simultaneously on each of the transmit 15 antennas, each antenna sending a different symbol from the column of the precoded matrix.

Referring now to figure 1, we present a system with four transmit antennas implementing a source matrix X and a precoding matrix Θ according to the invention.

20 For the sake of simplification, the description here and further below in the document is limited to the particular case of a square source matrix X and a square precoding matrix Θ .

Those skilled in the art will have no difficulty in extending this teaching to all types of matrices X and Θ , it being understood that the number of columns of 25 X should be equal to the number of rows of Θ , and that X must have M rows, where M is the number of transmit antennas.

The source matrix X , which comprises the information to be transmitted, is formed by four vectors X_1, X_2, X_3, X_4 , forming the rows of the matrix X .

Each vector X_i , for $i=1$ to 4, is formed by four symbols: $X_1=[x_1 \ x_2 \ x_3 \ x_4]$,
 30 $X_2=[x_5 \ x_6 \ x_7 \ x_8]$, $X_3=[x_9 \ x_{10} \ x_{11} \ x_{12}]$, $X_4=[x_{13} \ x_{14} \ x_{15} \ x_{16}]$.

The total number of symbols to be sent is therefore 16. This corresponds to the number of transmit antennas M multiplied by the number L of rows of the precoding matrix Θ .

5 The precoding matrix Θ is sized 4x4. It is a block matrix. According to one particular embodiment, the precoding matrix Θ is the following:

$$\Theta_L = \sqrt{\frac{2}{L}} \cdot \begin{bmatrix} \Theta_{L/2} & \Theta_{L/2} \\ \Theta_{L/2} & -\Theta_{L/2} \end{bmatrix}^T$$

with $\Theta_2 = \begin{bmatrix} e^{i\theta_1} \cos \eta & e^{i\theta_2} \sin \eta \\ -e^{-i\theta_2} \sin \eta & e^{-i\theta_1} \cos \eta \end{bmatrix}$

and $\eta = \frac{\pi}{4} + k \frac{\pi}{2}$, $\theta_2 = \theta_1 - \frac{\pi}{2}$, and for $i \in [1, 2]$, $\theta_i = \frac{\pi}{4} + k' \frac{\pi}{2}$ where k, k' are relative integers.

10 After multiplication of the source matrix X by the precoding matrix Θ , a precoded matrix S is obtained ($S = X \cdot \Theta$).

The matrix S , sized 4x4, is formed by four vectors S_i ($i = 1$ to 4) :

$$S_1 = [s_1 \ s_5 \ s_9 \ s_{13}], \ S_2 = [s_2 \ s_6 \ s_{10} \ s_{14}], \ S_3 = [s_3 \ s_7 \ s_{11} \ s_{15}], \ S_4 = [s_4 \ s_8 \ s_{12} \ s_{16}].$$

15 These vectors S_i , also called precoded vectors, correspond to the multiplication of the source matrix X by a same column of the precoding matrix Θ . Thus, S_1 corresponds to the vector obtained by the multiplication of the source matrix X by the first column of the precoding matrix Θ , S_2 corresponds to the vector obtained by the multiplication of the source matrix X by the second column of the precoding matrix Θ , and so on and so forth for the four columns of the 20 matrix Θ .

At a given point in time, each of the four transmit antennas 10, 11, 12 and 13 then sends one of the symbols of the same precoded vector S_i in the same sending burst.

25 Thus, at an instant T_0 , the first antenna 10 sends the symbol s_1 of the vector S_1 . Substantially at the same instant T_0 , the second antenna 11 sends the symbol s_5 of the vector S_1 , the third antenna 12 sends the symbol s_9 of the vector S_1 and the fourth antenna 13 sends the symbol s_{13} of the vector S_1 .

The other precoded vectors S_2 , S_3 and S_4 are respectively sent in three sending bursts corresponding to the times $T1$, $T2$ and $T3$.

Each of the symbols of a same precoded vector corresponding to the multiplication of a source matrix X by a same column of a precoding matrix Θ is 5 then sent on each of the transmit antennas, each antenna sending a different symbol of the precoded vector.

In other words, if the matrix S is deemed to be formed by four vectors S_1' , S_2' , S_3' , S_4' organized in successive rows, i.e. $S_1'=[s_1 \ s_2 \ s_3 \ s_4]$, $S_2'=[s_5 \ s_6 \ s_7 \ s_8]$, $S_3'=[s_9 \ s_{10} \ s_{11} \ s_{12}]$, $S_4'=[s_{13} \ s_{14} \ s_{15} \ s_{16}]$, then:

10 - the first symbols of each vector S_i' (for $i=1$ to 4) are sent on the different transmit antennas simultaneously, s_1 on the first antenna and s_{13} on the last antenna;

15 - the second symbols of each vector S_i' are sent on the different transmit antennas simultaneously, s_2 on the first antenna and s_{14} on the last antenna;

 - this operation is repeated until the last symbols of each vector S_i' .

Finally, the system transmits first of all $[s_1 \ s_5 \ s_9 \ s_{13}]$ at an instant $T0$, then $[s_2 \ s_6 \ s_{10} \ s_{14}]$ at $T1$, then $[s_9 \ s_7 \ s_{11} \ s_{15}]$ at $T2$, and finally $[s_4 \ s_8 \ s_{12} \ s_{16}]$ at $T3$.

Referring now to figures 2A and 2B, we present a system with four 20 receiver antennas.

After transmission in the MIMO channel, the received signals are constituted by vectors R_i (for $i=1$ to 4) organized in successive columns in a reception matrix R , where $R_1=[r_1 \ r_5 \ r_9 \ r_{13}]$, $R_2=[r_2 \ r_6 \ r_{10} \ r_{14}]$, $R_3=[r_3 \ r_7 \ r_{11} \ r_{15}]$, $R_4=[r_4 \ r_8 \ r_{12} \ r_{16}]$.

25 Thus, the reception matrix R is formed by symbols $[r_1 \ r_5 \ r_9 \ r_{13}]$ received substantially at the same instant $T0'$, depending on the lengths each of the transmit antenna / receiver antenna paths, on the four receiver antennas (r_1 on the first antenna 20, r_5 on the second antenna 21, r_9 on the third antenna 22 and r_{13} on the fourth antenna 23), the symbols $[r_2 \ r_6 \ r_{10} \ r_{14}]$ received substantially at the same

point in time T1' on the four receiver antennas as described here above as well as symbols $[r_3 \ r_7 \ r_{11} \ r_{15}]$ and $[r_4 \ r_8 \ r_{12} \ r_{16}]$ received at the times T2' and T3'.

According to a first embodiment illustrated in figure 2A, the procedure is based on the technique known as a technique "without ordering". The technique 5 starts first of all with the inverting of the coding channel estimated on the different transmit/receiver antenna channels so as to retrieve the estimated sent symbols.

Thus, a successive cancellation algorithm is implemented to detect the different transmit antennas.

This algorithm is the following:

$$10 \quad \begin{aligned} r &= sH \\ R_r &= HH^H + \sigma^2 I \\ a &= rH^H \\ b &= R_r^{-1}a = \frac{sHH^H}{HH^H + \sigma^2 I} \end{aligned}$$

with:

- 15 - r corresponding to the symbols received on the P receiver antennas, i.e. at the reception matrix R ;
- H being the channel, with size (MxP) ;
- σ^2 being the mean signal-to-noise ratio of the receiver antennas;
- R_r the self-correlation matrix;
- 20 - a corresponding to different vectors sized M according to the equation described here above;
- b corresponding first of all to the estimated values of the different symbol vectors sent $[s_1 \ s_5 \ s_9 \ s_{13}]$, then to the estimates of the symbols sent $[s_2 \ s_6 \ s_{10} \ s_{14}]$, then to the estimated values of the symbols sent $[s_3 \ s_7 \ s_{11} \ s_{15}]$, and finally then to the estimated values of the symbols sent $[s_4 \ s_8 \ s_{12} \ s_{16}]$,
- 25 - the exponent H signifying conjugate transpose.

This algorithm is like a V-BLAST decoding as described in "Improving BLAST Performance using Space-Time Block Codes and Turbo Decoding", 30 Globecom 2000, November 2000 (Baro, Bauch, Pavlic and Semmler) in the sense

of the minimum mean square error (MMSE) by which it is possible to retrieve the estimated values \hat{S}_i of the vectors S_i sent for i ranging from 1 to 4.

This amounts to multiplying the reception matrix R by a matrix representing the inverse of the transmission channel.

5 The vectors received are then re-ordered so as to retrieve the estimated values of the vectors sent S_1 , S_2 , S_3 , S_4 or again S_1' , S_2' , S_3' , S_4' , these estimated vectors being called $\hat{S}_1 = [\hat{s}_1 \hat{s}_2 \hat{s}_3 \hat{s}_4]$, $\hat{S}_2 = [\hat{s}_5 \hat{s}_6 \hat{s}_7 \hat{s}_8]$, $\hat{S}_3 = [\hat{s}_9 \hat{s}_{10} \hat{s}_{11} \hat{s}_{12}]$ and $\hat{S}_4 = [\hat{s}_{13} \hat{s}_{14} \hat{s}_{15} \hat{s}_{16}]$ and being organized in successive rows in a matrix called a matrix of estimated symbols.

10 The receiver then multiplies the matrix of estimated symbols obtained \hat{S} by a de-precoding matrix, to form a de-precoded matrix \hat{X} used to extract an estimation of the source symbols sent. The de-precoding matrix corresponds to the conjugate transpose of the precoding matrix Θ used when sending (referenced Θ^H in figure 2A)

15 Since the precoding matrix Θ is unitary, multiplying the matrix of estimated symbols obtained \hat{S} by the transposed and conjugate precoding matrix Θ^H amounts to multiplying the matrix \hat{S} by the matrix Θ^{-1} that is the inverse of the precoding matrix Θ : $\hat{X} = \hat{S} \cdot \Theta^H = \hat{S} \cdot \Theta^{-1}$.

20 The de-precoding step $\Theta^H = \Theta^{-1}$ is therefore performed at the level of each V-BLAST iteration.

25 In a second embodiment shown in figure 2B, the inversion of the channel encoding and the de-precoding operation are done in conjunction, in implementing a Cholesky decomposition algorithm. Such an algorithm is described especially by Wei Zha and Steven D. Blostein in "Modified Decorrelating Decision-Feedback Detection of BLAST Space-Time System" (ICC 2002 ,Vol. 1, pp. 335-339, Apr-May 2002) . This technique is called a technique "with ordering".

30 In this embodiment, the receiver multiplies the reception matrix R , formed by the vectors $R_1 = [r_1 \ r_5 \ r_9 \ r_{13}]$, $R_2 = [r_2 \ r_6 \ r_{10} \ r_{14}]$, $R_3 = [r_3 \ r_7 \ r_{11} \ r_{15}]$, $R_4 = [r_4 \ r_8 \ r_{12} \ r_{16}]$ organized in successive columns, by the inverse of a total matrix G , the matrix G

corresponding to the association of the channel matrix and the precoding matrix Θ .

The inverse of the total matrix G , also called a de-precoding matrix, is obtained by implementing a Cholesky decomposition within which an ordering 5 operation is carried out.

The ordering operation makes it possible to take a decision first of all on the symbol of the total matrix G having the highest power. The symbols are thus processed in a decreasing order of power.

The Cholesky algorithm is the following:

$$10 \quad R = X\Theta H$$

$$R_r = P_p(\Theta H H^H \Theta^H + \sigma^2 I) P_p^H$$

$$R_r = LL^H$$

$$R_r^{-1} = (L^H)^{-1} L^{-1}$$

$$x = RH^H \Theta^H P_p^H$$

$$15 \quad y = x(L^H)^{-1}$$

$$z = P_p y L^{-1} = \frac{P_p X \Theta H H^H \Theta^H P_p^H}{P_p(\Theta H H^H \Theta^H + \sigma^2 I) P_p^H}$$

with:

- r corresponding to the symbols received at the P receive antennas, i.e. to the reception matrix R ;
- 20 - X corresponding to the source matrix sent ;
- Θ being the precoding matrix sized 4×4 ;
- H the channel matrix sized 4×4 ;
- σ^2 the mean signal-to-noise ratio of the receiver antennas;
- R_r the self-correlation matrix;
- 25 - L the lower triangular matrix of the self-correlation matrix R_r ;
- P_p the permutation matrix according to a criterion of maximum power of the desired symbol on the interference of this self-correlation matrix;

- x and y are vectors sized 16 (the number of transmit antennas multiplied by the number of rows of the precoding matrix Θ).

At reception, the Cholesky decomposition algorithm enables the receiver to directly obtain a vector z sized 16 (number of transmit antennas multiplied by 5 the number of rows of the precoding matrix Θ) corresponding to the estimation of the symbols sent by the source matrix X in a de-precoded matrix \hat{X} .

The Cholesky decomposition is a numerically stable decomposition.

In this embodiment, the advantage of the precoding is to decorrelate the channels if they are correlated.

10 Since the de-precoding matrix is a block matrix, the reception system may further be improved by using a technique of distance minimization by changing of symbols in a block.

15 Referring now to figure 3, we present the performance levels obtained, according to the invention, by using a precoding matrix sized 4x4 and a precoding matrix sized 256x256.

20 More specifically, figure 3 illustrates the performance values of the invention according to the first embodiment without ordering, i.e. when the de-precoding matrix corresponds to the conjugate transpose of the precoding matrix: systems that use a linear precoding according to the invention are compared with a prior art system without precoding.

25 A gain of 16.0 dB can be observed between the reference curve, which corresponds to a system without precoding, and the curve with precoding 256, which corresponds to system using a precoding matrix sized 256x256, when the binary error rate (BER) is 10^{-4} , with a spectral efficiency of 8 bps/Hz, when MMSE type equalizers are used at reception.

Thus, the invention improves performance with high signal-to-noise ratio while at the same time maintaining complexity in terms of $O(L^3)$, where L is the size of the precoding matrix, or again the number of rows of the precoding matrix if this matrix is not a square matrix.

For its part, the prior art approach of Ma and Giannakis ("Full-Diversity Full-Rate Complex-Field Space-Time Coding", IEEE Transactions on Signal Processing 2003), which also uses precoding matrices, cannot be used to obtain a precoding matrix sized 256 because the method would be far too costly in terms 5 of computation. Indeed, the complexity of this approach is an exponential factor in terms of $O(M^L)$, where M corresponds to the size of the modulation.

The performance values of the invention are further improved when the second embodiment with ordering is implemented at reception

Indeed, when this embodiment with ordering is implemented, a precoding 10 matrix sized 4x4 gives results substantially identical to those obtained with a precoding matrix sized 256 in the embodiment without ordering, i.e. a gain close to 16.0 dB relative to a reference curve, which corresponds to a system without precoding when the binary error rate (BER) is 10^{-4} , with a spectral efficiency of 8 bps/Hz.

15 With the performance of the system improving when the size of the precoding increases, very good results are obtained for a system with ordering and a precoding matrix sized 256x256.

Thus, the proposed invention enables a decoding that is less complex and less costly than with prior art techniques while at the same time showing 20 improved performance.

Furthermore, the technique of the invention is suited to single-carrier modulation systems as well as to multiple-carrier modulation systems (OFDM or MC-CDMA systems for example).

It can be applied to any multi-antenna system that gives preference to the 25 exploitation of capacity, achieving this result even if the multi-antenna channels are correlated.